



**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
20301 MAIL SERVICE CENTER • RALEIGH, NC 27699-0301**

**BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE
GOVERNOR**

May 4, 2010

Assistant Secretary Larry Strickling
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
HCHB, Room 4812
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Strickling:

Thank you for the opportunity to make comments and provide my input on Round 2 of NTIA's Broadband Technology Opportunities Program. I was particularly pleased to see North Carolina received three awards in BTOP Round 1, including two of the programs I recommended for funding. North Carolina has a long and impressive history in the area of broadband development, and the use of high speed internet for educational and economic development purposes. I hope we can continue our pioneering position in Round 2.

As in Round 1, to assist my review I relied upon an appointed review committee with members recommended by various public groups involved in rural broadband implementation across the state. The BTOP Review Committee reviewed all participating applications with a North Carolina service area and provided me with guidance and feedback on those applications in advance of my comments to you. The BTOP Committee divided itself into two subcommittees: the Subcommittee on Comprehensive Community Infrastructure and the Subcommittee on Sustainable Broadband Adoption and Public Computer Centers (PCC/SBA). The subcommittees made the following recommendations, in the three BTOP funding areas:

1. The Subcommittee on Comprehensive Community Infrastructure Applications recommends:
 - a. MCNC's North Carolina Rural Broadband Initiatives (NCRBI) program
 - b. MAIN's CCI program
2. The Subcommittee on PCC/SBA recommends, for the Public Computer Center category:
 - a. North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, North Carolina State Library program
 - b. The PCC/SBA wishes to highlight, in the Public Computer Center category:
 - i. Winstonnet Inc.
 - ii. Renovation and repurposing projects
 1. Olive Hill Community Economic Development Corporation
 2. Greater Lansing Area Development
3. The Subcommittee on PCC/SBA recommends, for the Sustainable Broadband Adoption category:
 - a. MAIN's SBA Cloud Computer program
 - b. The PCC/SBA wishes to highlight, in the Sustainable Broadband Adoption category:
 - i. UNC-Pembroke's CIVC program
 - ii. Elauwit SBA program

Please find attached the full report from the BTOP Review Committee. The report includes information regarding the committee discussion of the above recommended projects, including discussion of North Carolina specific elements based on the committee membership's intimate knowledge of the state and its population. The report reflects the priorities I recommend for your consideration.

I would like to highlight one of the above programs that has the highest value to North Carolina, MCNC's North Carolina Rural Broadband Initiative. MCNC's \$111 million program application builds upon its Round 1 grant, further extending NCREN (North Carolina Research and Educational Network) in rural North Carolina, and developing extensive public/private partnerships for the delivery of last-mile service to underserved and at-risk populations. The project is important in high unemployment areas for the immediate economic impact of jobs created by the project, and the future high speed infrastructure the program would establish as the foundation of high speed internet growth in North Carolina.

MCNC has created an application that has great impact to North Carolina, fulfills the goals of BTOP, and takes advantage of this once-in-a-generation opportunity to make an historic expansion of North Carolina's fiber infrastructure. MCNC has effectively run NCREN for more than 25 years and is an experienced handler of private and federal grant awards. MCNC has made every effort to enlist public and private partners in each geographic area of the 69-county project. The application has the support of numerous North Carolina institutions, was supported by a \$28 million grant for matching funds by North Carolina's Golden LEAF Foundation, and was endorsed by the entire North Carolina congressional delegation when submitted in March. In conclusion, I believe the MCNC BTOP application, of all the applications to BTOP with a North Carolina service area, best serves the needs of North Carolina.

Once again, I thank you for the opportunity to have input on this important program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Bev Perdue", with a stylized, cursive script.

Bev Perdue

cc: Ian Martinez

Attachment